

BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Haine, the Modern Spartacus

(By Joseph Rogers.)

He cut these words on the shield of Thought:
"The people ask the joys of Right;
The wrong that long the church has wrought,
Shall aid no more the reign of night."

He saw the Lie in halls of State;
"The powers that be" take Freedom's all;
He saw Shylock exact his rate,
And drive the widow to the wall.

He mark't the thinkers how they built,
The engines of the country's might,
And yet their blood was freely spilt,
If they did claim a freeman's right.

The divine mandate everywhere
Was trotted out to still unrest;
The shackled thinker did not dare,
To voice the thought his mind express'd.

"Arise! Ye slaves, and drive the curse
From out your homes to endless death;
Arise! Let not its greed make worse
The woes that Love encountereth!"

"Away with shackles from the child;
The fetters link the nation's name
To all the horrors that compiled,
The chapter of your daughter's shame."

"Arise! And sound the roar of war
And sweep these terrors from the hills;
The reign of tyrants shall no more,
Enslave the wish that Mercy wills."

A band of men seathed by the fire
Of ills that sapp'd the nation's life,
Mark't well the cause that did inspire
The brawny chief to talk of strife.

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The chieftain closed their marshal'd ranks,
As to the foe they nearer drew;
A field of carnage wrap't their flanks,
But fearless marched the dauntless few.

They saw the boot, the bloody rack,
The bones of thousands on the plain:
Old history turned her pages back,
To show the church's work again.

They noticed Bruno's charred skull,
The blazing stakes upon the green,
The loathsome prisons teeming full
Of men whose aim the Truth had been.

They heard the cry of tortur'd hosts,
The dying voice that asked relief,
But echo rang the tyrant's boasts,
And added venom to their grief.

The feudal lord with vassal train,
With cruel zeal did carve his way,
Though living flesh, through heart and brain,
To bring a county 'neath his sway.

The martyr, with his face aglow,
Did point toward the dawning day
And spake of "Freedom," but the foe,
Devour'd him as he stood at bay.

The chattel slave at the auction block,
With anxious eyes survey'd the throng,
As his new master did unlock,
The links of love he'd known so long.

The bones of Brown smote by the wind,
Did groan a warning in the air;
"Be careful as ye free your kind,
Lest Death o'ertaketh those who dare."

A T Parker
High and Ashland East Side
Sep 08

The noble Foote, in prison bound,
Did break the grip of iron chains,
And sprang toward the battleground
Where blood was drawn from Freedom's veins.

An ancient wolf, with dripping tongue,
And pamper'd by the modern Church and State,
About the tomb of Justice hung,
And snarl'd the breath of blasting hate.

* * * * *

The Star of Freedom shone afar
To light and guide the nation's tread,
But alas! The forces of the Czar
The pathways filled with the dead.

The chieftain viewed the hosts ahead,
Their gaping maws of deadly night,
But matchless valor did not dread,
To cast the gauntlet for the Right.

"The foe is there and out beyond
The promised land of Freedom lies,
Where Mercy, Justice, will respond,
To keep the flag across the skies.

"No weakness now but worthy deeds
Will win the groaning world relief,

So follow where my helmet leads,
If e'en to death," so spake the chief.

"Halt!" came a voice from out the night,
"The seated powers will not share
With slaves the joys beyond the height.
Go back! The bravest perish'd there."

In silence, like avenging ghosts,
The trained warriors swiftly swept
Against the foeman's steeled hosts;
Where death from duty never crept.

The dying soldier as he fell,
Did shout the gallant remnant on,
And though abreast the brink of hell,
The prospect frighten'd not a one.

What need to war when Mankind's good,
By Freedom's cause was doubly arm'd?
The warrior's zeal, the pools of blood,
Drove Evil from the field alarm'd.

The heights were gained, the chieftain stood
In the blazing light of the risen star;
The race had gain'd the greatest good,
And lived the tune of Love's guitar.

Salt Lake City, Utah.

Pen Points for Earnest Thinkers

Current Topics and Freethought Happenings Discussed for the
Benefit of Blade Readers.

(By Josephine K. Henry.)

Churchyard as a Playground.

It is generally conceded that Trinity Church of New York City is one of the wealthiest, most grasping and grinding corporations on earth. The grounds around its various churches have for two centuries been fenced in. The iron gates were always locked except during services. Some influence has been brought to bear, and the cloistered silence has been broken. The iron gates have been thrown wide open and the old burying grounds converted into playgrounds for the poor children of the congested districts of the city. The gloom and silence of these grounds are now dispelled by the merry laughter, and the echo of children's voices raised in play, as they romp about these old moss grown churches. Good for old Trinity. This is the best thing ever recorded of her. For two centuries old Trinity has been busy extorting excessive rents from the poorest classes of people and evicting tenants, and professing to lead the mythical souls of humanity to a mythical God, and busier still gathering in the dollars by the begging process, fighting legal battles and dodging taxes. The religion taught at Trinity is out of date, and intelligence is making wry faces at her and she must do something so she has opened her lands worth millions as playgrounds for children. The next best and safest thing for Trinity to do is to put itself on the tax list pay all its back taxes, give its old mouldy churches a genuine spring cleaning inside and out, con-

vert the buildings into manual and technical schools, lecture halls, and places of amusement. Trinity should dismiss its army of clerical parasites, use some of its vast income in building a free crematory, and remove all its graveyards by the method of cremation, and convert valuable lands to the use of the living. One of the crying needs of our time is the establishment of free crematories in every community. Cemeteries are breeders of despair, disease, and death, and if Trinity will build a free crematory it will set a fine example and do some practical good in the world.

What is a Presbyterian?

William Jennings Bryan asks in a despairing voice, "What is a Democrat?" Now to this query may be added: What is a Presbyterian? The Union Theological Seminary in its 25 years war has turned out from its preacher factory as many kinds of Presbyterians as there are kinds of buttons. On July 8th the U. T. Seminary graduated the Rev. George A. Fitch. In his examination Rev. Fitch denied the virgin birth of Christ, the historical identity of Adam and Eve, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and the resurrection of the body of the savior. After these positive denials the New York Presbytery by a vote of 7 to 10 immediately ordained the Rev. Fitch and sent him to convert the "Heathen Chinese." Rev. Dr. Gregory violently opposed Rev. Fitch's ordination and said "It is a case of the Bible against men. One or the other had to be thrown out and the Presbytery of New York threw out the bible as the infallible guide to faith and practice. With Presbyterians, Paul is a greater authority than Jesus Christ. What will the New York

Presbytery do with Paul? Paul says plainly in 1st Corinthians, 15, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19:

"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

"For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised."

"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

"Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

"If in this life only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

By the ordination of the Rev. Fitch the Presbyterians have joined the college professors in "Blasting at the Rock of Ages." Harold Bolee should look after them as they have placed a heavy charge under "The Confession of Faith." If St. Paul has heard of the action of the New York Presbytery he must be as dazed as he was on that memorable trip to Damascus. Ah well-a-day! Let them have their say. It is evident that orthodoxy is in an advanced stage of creeping paralysis, and like old age there is no cure for it under the sun, moon, or stars.

Alone With Jesus.

A woman returning from a church convention recently looked herself in the lavatory of a Pullman sleeper and was singing at the top of her voice: "There's nobody here but Jesus and me." To protect the rights of the other passengers, the conductor called into her, and said: "Jesus don't take up much room, what is needed is for you to get out of that room as soon as possible." The signs of the times show that Jesus is considered a myth by even ordinary people in all the walks of life.

Dr. J. B. Wilson's "Trip to Rome."

A careful re-reading of Dr. Wilson's "Trip to Rome," profoundly impresses me with the fact that it is the best work of travel ever written by an American. It leaves the beaten path of the literature of travel. Dr. Wilson has a style all his own. "A Trip to Rome," is an artistic blend of optimism and pessimism, of scathing criticism of the superstitions, shams, foibles and follies of the past and present, and that exalted human feeling "which makes the whole world kin." In his observations of the old world the author of "A Trip to Rome" at one time strikes chords of harmony with the touch of a master hand that holds the pen, then of a sweet singing poet, and again of the enthusiastic antiquary and folk-lorist, then as with the roar of a cataract he smashes into fragments religious legends intolerance, and ignorance with the sturdy iconoclasm and polished diction of a Saladin, and an Ingersoll.

Dr. Wilson puts the old picture of European travel in a new frame and in a new light. This book will be of immense value to those who have been to Europe, or those who intend to go, to those who are still in the shell of ultra conservatism, and to those who have come into the refreshing atmosphere of freethought. "A Trip to Rome" will make you laugh loudly and smile grimly; will make you serious, and at the same time profoundly sad; will make you smell the odor of spring violets, and the stench of the slums, but best of all it will always make you think.

Freethinkers in Europe and America have cause to be proud of the literary work of Dr. J. B. Wilson. In the future his writings will have an honored place in the literary Pantheon. "A Trip to Rome" should be in all our public libraries. Let us hope that this valuable work of travel, and Dr. Wilson's forthcoming book of poems will require many editions of them to supply the demand.

A God of Love.

Walt Mason draws a graphic pen picture of the preacher in these lines.

"He sings old hymns to rag-time tunes,
And talks of men's immortal souls,
As our fat grocer prates of prunes.
He talks of crowns and harps of gold,
As though he had them in his trunk;
He cords us up within its fold
With other piles of human junk."

Pope, plebian, plutocrat and pauper are all off the same piece of goods. Scratch the clerical veneer, and we have "mere man" in the great seething mystery we call life. Yet amid the storm of tears and blood that ever rages in this world of mystery and misery, the priest cries out amid the storm that a "God of love, made all that is, and pronounced it very good," and for this the priest demands tribute, with threat of eternal punishment if refused. When the world grows wise enough to refuse to support the priest or any of his schemes we can dispense with a man-made god and his business agents, the clergy.

Buckeye Secular Union.

Greetings and greetings to the members of "The Buckeye Secular Union." May its coming convention at Columbus, O., September 12, prove to be an epoch-making event, and inspire other states to organize in the interest of mental freedom. Considering what the newspapers and magazines are doing for the cause of freethought, as many should attend the Columbus meeting as attend our national political conventions, and but for mental cowardice this would be the case. It would be quite appropriate for Harold Bolee to marshal his freethought college presidents and professors and come in all the majesty of their intellectual liberty to Columbus on September 12th. The world is just waking up and finding out "where it is at" and the work of the Buckeye Secular Union has helped it on to this discovery. Let us hope that freethinkers from other sections will attend this meeting and be inspired to more aggressive work. The woods are full of freethinkers if they only dared to come into the open. Success to the Buckeye Secular Union.

A Modern Miracle.

It seems that the days of miracles have not passed. The press announces that last Sunday, July 18, at the church of Jean Baptiste on 76th Street, New York, a woman named Mary Brown who had been totally blind for 12 years, had her sight completely restored by kissing a silver bowl that held the wrist bones of St. Anne. The woman cried out: "I see you St. Anne, O good St. Anne, I see you." The worshipers in the church claim that a great miracle was performed but the blind woman whose sight was restored disappeared and the police have been unable to find her. St. Anne whose wrist bones cured this woman of blindness was the mother of the Virgin Mary. As "Holy Mary" was the "Mother of God" St. Anne is God's mother-in-law. Let us hope that God thinks more of his mother-in-law than some men do of theirs. Surely St. Anne by her wrist bones is a miracle worker doing all she can to perpetuate the religion founded by her son-in-law. Good for St. Anne. Suppose the faithful start her wrist bones on a tour of the country opening the eyes of the blind. St. Anne's wrist bones could get in some effective work in the blind asylums. If St. Anne's wrist bones will do this, she will put the skeptics and doubting college presidents and professors out of business.

The Morality of Christianity

**Influence of Superstition Upon Conduct
Decidedly Unwholesome—Morality
Grows With Intelligence.**

(By A. A. Snow.)

During all of our lives we have heard from Christian pulpits about Christianity being the fountain head of all morality. We are frequently told that were it not for Christianity this would not be a decent world to live in; and that we would have no security for life, liberty and property. But we have also always noticed that should anyone express doubts on such a supposition it would not be at all pleasant for him. Should he ask for the privilege of giving his reasons for an adverse opinion and present some facts to the people showing the other way it would raise a tempest indeed. And it would not be a tempest of argument or reason either; it would not be inspired by intelligence or morality. But it would be a tempest that would have no respect for morality, fairness, justice or even truth. It would be a tempest that would seek to trample all the beautiful features of morality into the dust: A tempest whose father is chaos; whose mother is hate; and whose guardian angel is the blackness of night.

**Intelligence is the Creator of Morality and
the Suppression of Thought is Its
Orthodox Devil.**

The history of Christianity is the history of the suppression of thought. Christianity is not the fountain head of morality but a dam to hold back the flow; and because the flow overtops the dam the dam-maker asks for the credit of the stream.

The bible is not a friend to free speech and is thus an enemy to both intelligence and morality. Christianity condemns a man to eternal damnation for his belief, and the old testament puts him to death for giving his opinion to his fellow man. Paul would condemn to eternal flames those that would preach contrary to his views. So this intolerance is not an incidental feature of some churches; not simply a prodigal step of some that have wandered away from the straight path; but it is characteristic, or fundamental to the bible itself. Those few churches that are liberal or tolerant are such as have wandered away from the narrow track into infidelity. It is true that Jesus now and then is made to speak words that indicate a beacon toward liberty, but then again he is made to voice sentiments darker than the dungeon; and also to swear allegiance to the old bible which puts man's intellect in eternal chains.

There were ancestors of man who were

not moral beings. Morality sprang up along with intelligence; even the dog has some moral traits according to his intelligence. But man was a moral being ages before Christianity existed. Through the use of speech man grew in intelligence and became moral in proportion to his ability to think and converse.

Ethics, like science is subject to correction and improvement by experience and applied intelligence. Some things we thought were right in past time we have come to find out are wrong, while others that were condemned as wrong we now know were right. Christianity claims its code and precepts are handed down direct from God who is perfect, and that they, therefore, cannot be improved upon. Therefore to move the Christian in a forward way, either in science or ethics, is like moving a dead weight. In fact he is almost constantly pulling back. As an example of this we might cite the case of the Pope of Rome. He comes out in opposition to women having a voice in the affairs of government and as usual he bases that opposition on the teachings of the bible. And many other examples might be given. What little advancement is made by Christianity is through the influence of infidelity within its own ranks, or through deception as to the real teaching of the bible.

That there was morality before Christianity is known by every reader of ancient history, and all such readers that give Christianity the monopoly on it preach what they know to be a lie and are themselves malicious and immoral deceivers. Some who are more cautious only tell us that the belief in a god inspires the believer to a duty of obedience to that god, and thus to morality. Of course there is a debit as well as a credit column to take into consideration in this matter; and farther, so far as the effect is concerned, it would make not a particle of difference whether that god really existed or not; and the preacher need not be concerned whether he is making an appeal based on truth or falsehood. Now can it be a healthy morality that is based on falsehood? But again this last speaker comes in conflict with his own bible for it teaches that the gods of the heathen are all idols and are all powerless and valueless to man. What then inspired the morality of these heathen, for they are moral, more or less?

It is sometimes claimed that the infinite threats on the one hand, and promises on the other, of the gods are great incentives to morality. But Christianity can make no boast over the heathen system in this re-

spect; and in this respect too, it might be absolutely false and have the same effect as if true. Besides an act to be moral must be performed for principle and not through fear or the expectation of pay. He who takes up his armor for pay is outside the moral arena; notwithstanding the fact that in the line of evolution the moral has grown out of the non-moral; and the unselfish is the outgrowth of the selfish. Besides, to orthodoxy and the bible, man's eternal destiny does not turn on his moral or immoral acts, but whether or not he has been converted or baptized; if the moral has anything to do with it it is only secondary in its significance. Orthodoxy being true, belief is far ahead of deeds. The desperate criminal has as good a chance of escaping hell as the moral man. As to whether a man goes to heaven or hell is a question of chance; since every one that grows up is exposed to the penalty of hell fire at least a part of his life, and that unavoidably. As to whether he finally gets to heaven or hell depends on whether he chances to get converted or not before death. All are bound to be unconverted, and fire brands for hell a part of their life. I detest any idea of morality built on the principle of "seven up." What must the moral effect be to tell the criminal that he, at any time before death, can unload the consequences of his misdeeds on some innocent person and he himself go free?

If a man is forced onto this earth, having no voice in the matter; forced to be exposed to the penalty of endless woe, as it is claimed all are during an indefinite period of time; forced to die and that at any moment of time not known to him; and then if he gets into an endless hell either because he died before he made his escape, or because he failed to make the escape before he died: I say if he deserves such fate for such culpableness, what fate does the one deserve that forced him to take such hazardous chances?

The penalty for sin as given by orthodoxy or the bible cannot be counted a penalty at all, but a tragedy, and an awful one too. And while it would be policy for one to make effort to escape such a fate should he be convinced that it exists, there would be no merit whatever in such an attempt; no more than in the attempt of an unfortunate man to petition a governor or jury to escape the gallows. Morality will not run in such tracks as is built for it by Christianity. That railroad is laid out side of its realm. There may be demerit in an attempt to shift off ones responsibility and avoid his just deserts. But there is neither merit nor demerit in accepting or rejecting the salvation offered by the bible. It would be simply a matter of investment.

Lineville, Iowa.

Further Criticism on Dr. Hausman

Land and Single Tax Reviewed by Another Disciple of Late Henry George.

(By Dr. J. C. Barnes.)

I see in some previous numbers of the Blade, under the heading of "Man's Origin and Destiny," criticisms of several chapters of Henry George's great work, "Progress and Poverty," by Dr. A. Hausman, which it seems to me to lack lucidity, and without offering a remedy for existing inequalities of conditions in society. It seems to be a defense of present conditions and an animus against the "Single Tax," which is in reality an abolition of all taxes, and the term "Single Tax" is used for want of a better term to concisely express the modus operandi of collecting the economic rent or annual value of land—a value given land by all the people and therefore should belong to all the people.

It is said in the Declaration of Independence that all men have an "equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," which implies an equal right to somewhere to live. Since all have an equal right to land, all have an equal right to the choice sites or portions of land. And the only possible way to equalize the land to all is for those occupying choice sites to pay to all others, the difference between the least desirable sites and the more desirable sites. This difference in value of land is termed by political economists, "Economic Rent." Rental value does not exist except in a community of people, and the rental value is proportioned to population in the same country or among the same class of people. Or in other words, the value of land depends on the social growth of a community.

The anarchist the Dr. writes of coming to this country who has never contributed to the value of land, under a so-called single tax, have to pay rent to all the people—even though he lived in a hotel, he would add to the value of the land the hotel stood on and his board bill would go partly to economic rent or annual value of the land.

The single tax is not a political invention for governmental purposes, but a discovery as all truth is, of how to equalize the earth to all, and give all equal opportunities to live. Land is the source of all wealth, and of all opportunity to live. No one needs more land than he can use, and would not own more and hold it out of use, if he had to pay as much economic rent on it as he or some one else paid on an adjoining improved lot of the same

value. So the poor laborer could, if not employed by capital, erect a house and have a home. The single tax would virtually set land free, and all who desired a home could have one, free of tax except the ground tax, which he now pays anyhow to a landlord, and the tax he would pay would be to himself, for it would be expended on streets, parks, sewerage, lights, fire departments, schools, etc.. Land being free, no man would work for less wages than he could pay himself on free land.

The Dr. uses the words capital and money carelessly it seems to me. He writes of land as capital when it is simply the source of capital and other wealth. Capital is laid up wealth to assist labor in producing other wealth. To show that capital and land are very different, if we tax capital or wealth, the tax is shifted onto the consumer and products are higher priced, whereas if you tax land values, you make land cheaper. Land is neither capital nor wealth; for all wealth is the products of labor on land. He writes of money being the standard of value, when there can be no standard of value. Value is an emotion, and can no more be a standard or measure than love, beauty, sublimity or any other emotion.

To equalize the land to all would equalize the wealth to the producers of wealth, to whom alone it should belong. Capital alone never made a man very wealthy. Capitalists often fail in business—the landlord never. All the very rich men own very valuable land. The land of a country is of the same value as all wealth on the land, and to take the annual value of land as a tax, would reduce the so-called wealth of the rich one half. The value of land would not be reduced, but the value would go to all, instead of to a few as now. Every man, woman and child adds \$500 to the aggregate value of land exclusive of improvements. Do they get it? Dr. Hausman knows they do not, and he knows the producer should have an equivalent to what he produces. And since all, or practically all alike produce all the value of land, all should have it. And there is no other way under the sun by which each can get his share of the value of land except by the single tax on land values; not land, but land values. Much land would have no value to tax. The farmer on poor land remote from populous centers would pay no tax, for his improvements and products being exempt, and so much good land made free, his land would fall below the margin of rent or cultivation. It would be better

for nearly all farmers, for exempting his improvements, his stock, his grain and farm machinery, and what he consumes, lowering the price on all he buys, for he is the greatest consumer of any class, he would be greatly benefitted by the single tax. It would financially injure only the landlord living off the rents of land he charges others for occupying, and the man who like Marshal Field who had the advantage of his competitors as a merchant, by owning the site, 33-4 acres of land under his store, worth \$8,000,000 per acre, while some of his competitors paid out as rent 5 per cent on the value of the land their stores stand on. The economic rent of the land on which Field's store stands is \$1,500,000 per annum. The land is worth \$4 per acre for every man, woman, and child in Chicago. Take the population of any thriving town or city and multiply it by 4 and the product of the multiplication will be the value in dollars of the center acres in the town or city—showing that the population made the value of the land and the owner added no more to its value than any other person. Field died worth \$100,000,000, but half of his reputed wealth was in land values. He never could have been worth more than one fourth that had the single tax been in operation and the remainder would have gone to other people and a more equitable distribution of wealth would have existed.

But I could write in defense of the single tax enough to fill your paper, but I close, hoping your readers will read Henry George's works and learn all about the great moral subject, the single tax.

Areola, Ill.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BIBLE CLASS UNION OF AMERICA.

Text-Book—"Bible Myths and Their Parallels in Other Religions"—(By Doane.)

Lessons for the month of September, 1909:

Sept. 5.—The resurrection and ascension of Christ Jesus; from page 215 to page 225, the 28th line.

Sept. 12.—The resurrection and ascension of Christ Jesus; from page 225, 28th line to page 233.

Sept. 19.—The second coming of Christ Jesus, the millenium; page 233 to 244.

Sept. 26.—Christ Jesus as judge of the dead; 244 to 247.

PROF. A. J. CLAUSEN,

National Organizer.

St. Ansgar, Iowa.

MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

INDIVIDUALS AND DESTINY—ACCIDENT AND CIRCUMSTANCE
—HUMANITY—CRIMES, SENTIMENTS AND CRIMINALS.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

Investigation of the origin of social principles, the so-called social virtues and morals, showed us that they all spring from the same natural instincts, modified under various conditions, entirely independent of religion and therefore the same under all races and nations. Among all classes and professions we find individuals with more or less sympathy, we meet with priests who devote their energy to helping their parishioners in the troubles of life and deserve respect for their actions from all. On the natural ground of humanity people of all nationalities and creeds meet, human nature can not be suppressed by any laws or teachings. But such men with noble dispositions rise seldom to high positions in the church, for such are needed selfish men, without sympathy, who guard the material interest of the church, regardless of the welfare of the people: who can do a little cursing and damning,—burning is fortunately played out. Human instincts form the sole moral impulse for a priest as well as for any other person, all his own preaching and teaching can not alter a dot in his natural disposition, from which all actions spring. In the same country where I made the acquaintance of a priest whom I shall always remember with respect and pleasure, another priest was convicted of the murder of his wife and daughter, for the sake of money.

If we are the helpless product of nature, the question naturally arises, what can we do ourselves to shape our destiny, to what extent can a man be the maker of his own fate? The answer is simple enough—only to the extent of his physical and mental power, no further. He can exert himself to his utmost capacity, do his duty, work honestly and diligently, but the result depends on many accidental circumstances over which he has no control. If several persons act alike on this principle, we must call them morally equal, because nobody can do more than it is in his power, or, as the poet beautifully expresses it: "No bird can fly over himself." Still the result of their efforts, their success in life, may be a very different one. It is therefore impossible to say how much of the success in life a person owes to his own efforts and how much to circumstances. All we can do is to do our best and abide the result—fate. People who have been very successful in life are apt to overlook this very important factor, they attribute their good fortune altogether to their own mental superiority and look down with pride upon their less fortunate brethren. On the other hand there are many who have not complied with the first command of nature, who have not exerted their faculties to the utmost to solve

their own social question and who accuse fate of their failure, which is their own fault. The false teachings of the church prevent these people to see life in the right light and to fulfil their two-fold functions, as individuals and as part of the whole community. They are unable to discriminate between these social features which spring from universal, biological laws and are not within human power, and those which are the result of human errors and mistakes, amenable to correction. Instead of perceiving the truth that some members of society live in better circumstances, because they have not relied upon providence, but exclusively on their own industry and intelligence (or the ignorance of the masses, which amounts to the same) they accuse them of having unjustly appropriated more than their share of the earthly goods. But the most deplorable consequence of this misconception of life is the total disregard for the future of the offspring. If a person has succumbed to misfortune and has given up the battle against life, he has at least one advantage over the animal, he can cheat misery out of another victim, if he permits the curse to die with him and does not transmit it upon a new being. This is the gravest charge that today can be brought against religion, it destroys the feeling of responsibility against the offspring.

But, as mentioned at another place among the causes of poverty, there are incidents in human life which may reduce a man to abject poverty without his fault and appeal to sympathy as the only remedy, which seldom fails in such cases to respond generously. It is the permanent misery in large cities, with its accompanying disgusting attribute of squalor and brutality, that seems to blunt the feeling of the wealthier classes, who, always judging from their own success, seem to consider personal fault the only cause. Although this supposition is undoubtedly true in many, if not in most cases, there are others in which the hard fate is undeserved, who suffer under the general prejudice. The only way to alleviate and eradicate poverty is to discriminate between the unlucky and the unworthy elements, to apply charity judiciously, assist some with money and advice to a more elevated position and others with a rope. As a result of the perverted idea that charity has any moral merit (it is only a social necessity), and is a good work that will be rewarded in heaven, we find that people are loath to lend a helping hand to any one who is struggling against bad luck, before he has completely succumbed and become a ragged pauper. To poverty after it has assumed an appalling form and lost all decency and shame, alms flow freely, from vanity and conceit. The glaring contrast between the supplicant and the giver causes the latter to indulge in flattering comparisons and it appeals to his magnanimity. But deserving poverty, that does not lose

its self-respect, which feels keenly the humiliation of being unable to cope with adverse circumstances and struggles to the last moment, there is little hope for assistance in a foreign place. Many people will sooner contribute a dollar for the decent burial of a poor fellow who starved to death, than to give him a cent while he is living. People are usually generous when the occasion affords an opportunity for the ostentatious display of their charity.

How afraid people are to suffer any inconvenience in behalf of a human being, is illustrated by the following incident: Once I was going by stage to a small mining town in Colorado and just before entering the place, the driver pointed to a building, remarking that it had been occupied by a couple who were lynched for killing a little girl by cruel treatment. When I asked him why the citizens did not interfere and take the girl away from them before they accomplished the crime, he replied it would have been against the law, and when I asked him since when lynching formed part of the statutes, he became silent and meditative. I can not vouch for the truth of his statement, but it seems quite plausible and in conformance with the terror the people have of the law. Lynching is an unwritten law, universally acknowledged as a dictate of necessity, but to take a child away from fiends in order to save its life, would have brought the whole machinery of the law down upon the offenders.

Although there is, according to the agnostic views, no merit in giving alms and no reward in heaven, it would be good policy for the rich to devote some of their superfluous wealth to the improvement of the classes which form a constant menace for society. Poverty engenders crime and brutality when combined with ignorance and becomes dangerous in proportion as the numbers increase. The reign of terror during the French revolution and the commune during the siege of Paris in the last war, show the tendencies of this class and what may be expected when it comes into power. So far we have had but a few outbreaks of this element, but the social laws are the same here as in Europe, matters are rapidly approaching the social condition of that country and the danger is constantly increasing. Without entering into any details, I would recommend as the best plan to relieve misery and remove its disgraceful consequences, to abolish all alms, to organize a municipal department for the correction of society and devote all money that is now wasted in churches and worship to this purpose. Many of the members of the two worthless avocations, law and divinity, could devote their energies to the useful occupation of assorting the flock and separating the white and the black sheep. And in the same measure as deserving persons are assisted and encouraged, the severity against certain elements which will not listen to any other argument but force, ought to be increased.

There is a certain class of people who call themselves "Humanitarians," who look upon a criminal as a deluded, erring brother, denounce capital punishment and propose to reform all sinners by gentle persuasion and reasoning.

These saints are a great obstacle to social reform; they encourage crime and their motives spring often from an impure source, vanity and cowardice. They pretend to be so noble and good, because they lack the courage to execute the severe measures which are often necessary for the welfare of society. From such maudlin sentimentality arose the Indian-Right association, which is probably responsible for the cruel torture and death of many a peaceable settler. The Indian policy of the United States, the cowardly attitude of such a nation towards a handful of worthless savages, is a disgrace of which any other nation would be ashamed and for which the pious hypocrites in the East are principally responsible. Under the pretense of sympathy, but in reality from mercenary motives, for the sake of stealing for which the agencies afford the opportunity, this pernicious policy is kept up and the ferocious hordes of worthless savages are permitted by the government to rob and kill its own subjects. The lame excuse that the noble red man is abused by the ranch man and the bad cowboys, is a stale lie. The western settlers are generally an energetic, industrious class, superior in intellect; they can not help it when criminals from the states seek refuge in the haunts of the wild West, or if the agents of Uncle Sam exasperate the noble red man by stealing his allowances or trying to make him work. And for this the peaceable settlers are expected to suffer and submit cheerfully to scalping, because, as the humane idiots say, it is the nature of the noble red man and he ought not to be interfered with in his natural pursuit of happiness.

Humanity against criminals is inhumanity against their victims.

(To be continued.)

Correctly estimating the value of an unscrupulous press agent as an advertising medium, an investment of business gain, no matter the method used to obtain it, preachers are not averse to their employment for the purpose of attracting attention which they could not win by fair and honest means. Rev. Mr. Gordon, pastor of Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Chicago, Ill., now confesses that he made a pretense of rescuing a nine-year-old child from water only waist deep, but secured a newspaper reporter who wrote it up as a daring rescue at the risk of his life. One more fakir! That's all.

* * * *

We are nearing the end of Dr. Hausman's new book so far as its publication in the Blade columns is concerned. Once more we would remind our friends that postage will be prepaid on all advance subscriptions. But a short time remains for you to take advantage of this offer. If you intend to subscribe, do so now.

* * * *

The manuscript of a strong article from Judge Parish B. Ladd, criticising modern socialism, is now in our office. We expect to publish this in the issue of August the 29th.

BLUE GRASS BLADE.

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P. O. Box 393, Lexington, Ky.**DR. HAUSMAN'S BOOK ALMOST COMPLETE.**

With one more issue of the Blade, or more technically speaking, with the issue of September 5, we will have completed the serial publication of Dr. Hausman's book, Man's Origin and Destiny, in the columns of the Blade, and it will only be a matter of two or three weeks later when it will be put into pages and bound in book form, ready for delivery to those who have subscribed for it.

Having eliminated a few pages, the latter being written as an afterthought by the author, the manuscript has been reduced to that extent, but this will in nowise affect the book or the completeness of the argument. One of the objects existing in the mind of the author, by writing this book and striving for its publication, was to stimulate thought and discussion. This, he has done. The criticisms he has wrought will bear witness. A book with which the multitude can agree, and does agree, can not contain any startling truths. In order to foster this discussion we have decided to publish with the book, as an addenda, the criticisms that have been made, and close its pages with such responses as the author deems necessary, or fitting to the occasion. This will make a work well worth reading by every thinking man and woman and increase its value as a contribution to the current advanced literature of the nation.

The book will contain a picture and short biographical sketch of Dr. Hausman; the dedication to Prof. Ernst

Haeckel; the letter of acceptance by Prof. Haeckel after reading the manuscript submitted to him; the book itself as it has appeared from week to week in our columns; the best criticisms that have been made by Blade writers; the final response of the author.

As this will furnish an idea of what the book will contain we now urge upon our friends, who desire the book, to subscribe for it in advance and thus enable us to more satisfactorily meet the cost of its publication, and at the same time save themselves the cost of postage. Remember we prepay all postage charges on advance subscriptions, but after publication an additional charge must be made of 20 cents.

The book should be widely read. Its strictures upon the church, upon religious conceptions in general; its criticisms of society and of individuals in society, ought to give it that interest which means a wide circulation.

Now friends, the book will soon be in your hands and we hope for it a good reception.

THE PROPOSED ORGANIZATION.

There is considerable satisfaction to be found in the fact that one Freethought Editor has been found who "seconds the motion" of the Blade for a new national organization of American Freethinkers.

While heartily approving the project, on general principles, Editor William H. Maple, of the Ingersoll Memorial Beacon, Chicago, Ill., offers the wholesome suggestion that, in order to command that respect which must be its due, the proposed new organization must be built upon an "up-to-date scientific foundation" and he further suggests that the theses of Prof. Ernst Haeckel be made the "tentative declaration of principles" for the same. On this subject Brother Maple says:

"We second the motion of The Blue Grass Blade for a national organization of rationalists, and suggest, as we have many times, that Prof. Ernst Haeckel's theses be made its tentative declaration of principles. Mere "anti-orthodox sentiments," as the Blade suggests, will not do, for there are scores, if not hundreds of fads and foolish notions in this country just now that are anti-orthodox. Such an organization to command respect and be of worth must stand on an up-to-date scientific foundation."

The Blade appreciates the interest thus manifested and agrees with the suggestion in all that it implies, but as the strength, power and influence of the proposed organization can be found only in the number of individual units brought into cohesive power and force, the declaration of principles should be broad enough to include the vast army of schoolmen and collegiate instructors who have openly declared against orthodoxy and announced a new departure from superstitious methods and practices. Such elements may not unite with the movement at its inception, but once properly and successfully set in operation, the doors are open for their reception, and whether their admission be soon or late, it will offer them a haven, or refuge outside of

and beyond the church which they have practically renounced.

Realizing that some one must prepare the way, the Blade submitted the proposition through its columns, and solicited expressions from all concerning it. From a perusal of the communications published in our columns, it will be observed that, so far, the expressions given are unanimously in favor of the organization, not one opposing. Other and similar letters appear in this issue. Believing that the meeting of liberal minds, as suggested, was not only a possibility but a probability also, we had undertaken the preparation of a declaration of principles for submission to the body, when in session, simply as a means of bringing the subject up for discussion and for such amendments or additions as the majority should wisely determine. As showing how closely the thoughts in the mind of Brother Maple coincide with our own, we submit that part of the declaration of principles we had drafted, and while we do not entertain the thought that these may be final, they furnish an outline of what may and can be done, provided the meeting can be brought about. We submit the following:

"We believe that it is an inherent right common to all humanity to alter, change and modify all forms of religious beliefs or disbeliefs as the light of knowledge and the force of human reason shall proclaim that such alteration, change and modification become necessary to the welfare and happiness of the race.

"We believe that the inculcation and dissemination of high moral concepts are of greater worth to humanity than the professions of religious belief.

"We believe that morality is dependent upon secular considerations and is in practice and effect the greatest possible good to the greatest possible numbers irrespective of religious beliefs or disbeliefs.

"We believe that the conservation and promulgation of truth should be the constant aim of humanity.

"We believe that all orthodox religious conceptions of the universe are erroneous and that the Monistic system of Philosophy as announced by Prof. Ernst Haeckel will satisfactorily account for all phenomena and offers the best known system of Philosophy that could be applied to human life and endeavor.

"We believe that Science, demonstrated and applied to human affairs, constitutes the real savior of mankind."

As previously stated, in the submission of the foregoing, it is not intended that they should be final, but simply to suggest, to lay a foundation as it were, for others to fall into the discussion with such amendments, changes or additions as may be deemed advisable.

Beyond this, however, lies the plan, or method, of propaganda. Also the plan of organization. Both are equally important. The organization must be something more than a mere figurehead. Otherwise it will be useless. Its propaganda must be made effective if it is to be influential. To merely organize and lay down will be a waste of effort. To organize and work will be the means of success. That work must be along definite lines. Some system or method must

be formulated. Such details as these can only be decided by the meeting, if it is held. For the purpose of bringing the principles of the organization into prominence and public effect, there must be a system of lectures, debates, meetings and a distribution of literature. We would suggest an entirely new literature, for it must be admitted that too much of the literature now being disseminated by the Free-thought institutions of America center upon mere Bible doctrine, with too little upon the constructive elements of our cause. Such a work will demand two things. Persons capable of creating the kind of literature necessary and the money needed to meet the cost of publication and distribution. Happily we have both. We have men and women fully capable of preparing the literature and we have within our rank and file persons of means who would willingly contribute, once they were convinced that the organization, or those at its head, meant business. With these agencies at work the propaganda should be made two-fold.

First, as an exponent of the constructive elements embraced in the Monistic philosophy as best adapted to subserve the highest interests of humanity and the upbuilding of society by teaching the true relations of man to the universe and to others.

Second, by processes of education to overcome the presumptions of the church and its advocates, and to enable the mass of liberal thinkers to resist the same by a concerted plan of action.

The next issue is the plan of organization which necessarily goes to the manner of acquiring a membership, the election of such officers as may be deemed advisable and necessary, the payment of membership dues, and the general management. This is a matter of business detail which can be determined by the meeting itself. The principal things to be considered in this relation are, a set of capable and competent officers, a working Board of Directors and an efficient corps of workers in the field. The directors should be given authority to pass upon and give approval to all who undertake to represent the organization in fields of labor, maintaining a high standard of representation.

Merely to approve of such a plan is not sufficient, it needs active cooperation to win. From all parts of the country we are receiving approving communications. But, as we have previously hinted, the movement demands a "Leader," as every movement must demand, and that Leader must be one in whom the mass of American Free thinkers repose implicit confidence, one who is capable, competent, and sufficiently experienced to carry the movement to the highest pinnacle of success.

With such an organization at work can anyone doubt what the result will be? The harvest is ripe and ready for our gathering. Discontent, dissatisfaction, aye, even strife, mark the orthodox world. Old ties are being loosened. There is a rattling of the dry-bones. Men and women have been and they are now thinking for themselves. It would be the acme of cowardice for us to sit supinely at ease

while our liberties are being slowly frittered away when we have within our grasp the power to check all encroachments.

Just as soon as we can get our bearings in an intelligent shape, the result of this present effort will be duly announced and a semi-official call issued, or the movement declared at an end for the present.

The Blade would appeal to the heart, the intelligence, the patriotism of every Freethought man and woman to rally round the banner of mental freedom, and as the Blade has presented the motion, which has been gallantly seconded by the Ingersoll Memorial Beacon, now let your decision be made.

PREACHERS ARE NOT THINKERS.

There is an old German proverb which the average preacher would do well to remember. It runs: "Say not all thou knowest, but believe all thou sayest."

This suggestion which we offer to preachers, is trite. It would also be advisable for many of their followers and supporters to do likewise. Preachers are not apt to say all they know. They would lose out if they did. Nor would it be a safe bet that preachers, or their followers, actually believe all they say. Upon speculative subjects, such as theology, some doubt, however small, must exist in the normal mind. If no doubts are entertained the mind must be abnormal. The natural tendency is to inquire where positive and direct information is lacking. Mere inferences are altogether unsatisfactory. The mind that is satisfied is sure to be neglected and this inevitably leads to mental stagnation. Every inquiry is the child of discontent. Had humanity been always satisfied to believe without investigation, there would have been no science, no progress, and Jehovah would still be the lord of hosts.

Just as it has ever been the great aim of the world's wisest, greatest and bravest, to formulate some system of natural philosophy whereby a retrenchment of the evils of life might obtain, so has it been the concern of interested persons, moved by selfishness and egoism, to multiply and magnify those evils by preaching sentimentalism and superstition. The latter trend is out of harmony with nature. It leads humanity away from itself. It strikes at shadow and loses substance. It leads the human family into a Serbonian bog from which complete extrication seems well nigh impossible. Only by a system of anti-naturalism is superstition able to live. Changes may come and go, but the dread monster is still with us to torture and finally to ill. Nature means harmony. Superstition, sometimes called religion, is a perpetual discord. Religion steals the heart, poisons the mind, warps the judgment and sours the disposition of those who have it. Extreme piety is chronic despair.

Preachers say many things they ought not to say and have unsaid many things they ought to say. Preachers and people represent extremes. What is to the advantage of the former is a loss to the latter. Their interests are

not common. Posing as friends of the people, the preachers are really the people's greatest enemies. The preacher's friendship for the people depends upon the amount, regularity and frequency of his pay. Friendship that must be bought is not worth having. A true analysis of the preachers' religion would resolve it to a cash basis. If he has a habit of thinking he dare not let his thoughts become known. For the same reason he gives utterance to much he does not believe and keeps silent upon many things he does believe. The ecclesiastical system discourages independent thinking.

Deeply religious countries cannot progress beyond a point permitted by their mental masters. The physical slave had freedom only to work for his owner and his owner's personal profit. The mental slave is at liberty to pray and make joyful contribution of his means, but he must not think. No true believer expects a reward for his servitude until after he is dead. The preacher demands his pay right off. Unlike his flock, he is unwilling to wait or to take any chances. He is a millstone about the neck of humanity, a deadly cramp that seizes upon the swimmer in the ocean of life.

CHURCH AND STATE.

When, many years ago, the Freethinkers of America adopted as one of their principal aims, a complete separation of church and state, they were regarded as a sort of erratic extremists bent upon undermining the social fabric to merely gratify a personal whim, minus any laudable motive and unworthy of the slightest consideration. But the Freethinkers have never ceased in their efforts. In season and out of season, by tongue and pen, they faced the opposition with hearts forward and their backbone straight. They felt themselves growing with the importance of their work and their labors have borne a splendid fruition.

On almost every hand we now find that the notion of a complete divorce between church and state, is not only proper, but necessary. Many politicians have ventured an approval. Judges recognize and admit that social evils would result from a union of the ecclesiastical institutions and the governmental machinery of the republic. Magazine writers now fearlessly express themselves upon the subject, and these indicate a growing sentiment among the thinking and reasoning stratum of society, that the church is altogether out of place in government, and the government should keep itself aloof from church influences, unrestrained and untrammelled by these reactionary forces.

During the past week it became necessary for the Editor, in a professional capacity, to read over the proof sheets in page form, of Volume 130 of the Kentucky Reports. These reports are made up of decisions of the Judges of the Kentucky Court of Appeals, upon litigated cases brought from the trial courts upon issues of alleged legal errors. These judicial opinions, once formally pronounced, become the law of the Commonwealth, establishing judicial prece-

dent for the guidance of future litigation along similar lines. Among the cases reported in this volume is one brought from Knox County, Kentucky, wherein an issue was raised by the refusal of the County School Superintendent to pay the salaries of the teachers and janitors of the Graded School at Barbourville because of an alleged participancy of a Methodist College. Two lads, attending Union College, the institution in controversy, had been employed as janitors at the public school for a compensation, each, of \$8.00 per month, as a means of enabling them to earn their way through school. We offer this statement of the case as an explanation of the Court's opinion. Judge Henry S. Barker wrote the opinion, wherein he said:

"It is not denied that the services of a janitor were needed, or charged that the young men did not faithfully earn the pittance paid them; but the fact that they were students at Union College at the time of the employment seems to have presaged *all the evils of a union of Church and State.*"

With the local issues in the case we have not the slightest concern. The real point of interest to the Blade and its readers is to be found in the fact that a School Superintendent, in a remote mountain county of Kentucky, has had the courage to raise such an issue in the Courts and has practically secured a judicial declaration from the highest legal authority in the Commonwealth, that there exist "evils" in connection with a "union of Church and State," and is, therefore, to be rigorously avoided. But when this eminent judge made use of the expression "all the evils", he argues, by implication, that these evils are manifold and real. Were they not so, why would it be necessary, in a judicial opinion, to discuss them? The expression used is a practical declaration of the Kentucky Court of Appeals that evils would attend such a union, and as it is the duty of such tribunals to repress social evils, we may infer that a union of Church and State would not be tolerated in Kentucky, unless the Court of Appeals, as a Court of last resort, should overrule itself.

In addition to this, we find from a perusal of the September issue of Success Magazine, a somewhat similar reference to the subject. One page is devoted to "Women Everywhere," which consists of short notices concerning women in all parts of the world, socially and politically. An item dealing with the bill recently passed by the English Parliament legalizing the marriage of a widower with his deceased wife's sister, is among several others, and the author, after making reference to the opposition of the established clergy toward the bill, adds:

"The least we can do is to hope that a marriage so contracted will be happier and less troublesome than the *union of Church and State has proved in England.*"

There can be no mistaking these sentiments. They are the outcome of years of constant agitation upon the part of

American Freethinkers. But a few years ago, a Judge who dare to give such a judicial opinion, and a magazine editor who would allow such a sentiment to be published, would have felt the full force of Christian bigotry and hate, subjected to business boycott and political ostracism. Now things have changed. The intelligence of the nation is coming to our way of thinking. This old world is still moving.

That Jesus could possibly err in judgment, or belief, would not be admitted by the sincere believer, but Rev. a Deligren, pastor of the First Swedish Unitarian Church, Chicago, Ill., declares that the man-god of the Christian faith was wrong in his belief concerning devils, and had simply accommodated himself to current superstitions. The whole system of religion is a mere matter of accommodation. It follows the popular will as soon as it finds it is losing power to compel its own.

* * * *

When the mountain refused to arise and hump itself, Mahomet did the camel act and went unto the mountain. Because the people of Lima, Ohio, will not go to hear the parsons in church on Sunday, the parsons have agreed to take to street preaching and will go to the people. The average parson will run hard enough if there is only a collection in sight.

* * * *

Dr. Washington Gladden, of the Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio, declares "it would be mocking god if I trusted him to do what I could do myself." If god will not respond to prayer and do just whatever is wanted of him, he must be a sort of a cheap affair, and of small use to man. No man wants a god unless he can use him.

* * * *

According to statistics furnished by Rev. Walter Laidlaw, of the Federation of Churches, New York, the number of churches to the estimated population of Greater New York, has diminished in ratio during the past five years. This is an excellent sign and may a greater decrease be shown during the next five years to come.

* * * *

The Blade is receiving an unusually large number of applications for sample copies, which at this season of the year, would suggest that it is rapidly becoming more widely known. Apropos of sample copies we will send the Blade free for one month to any of your friends, provided you furnish us with name and address for that purpose. Think out a list and mail to us.

* * * *

In our next issue we propose to give our readers a stimulant on organization by a publication of some of the letters received on that subject.

* * * *

We are still a long way from doubling our circulation which we hope to do by the present year. Get busy.

* * * *

God, Man and the Earthquake

Speech Delivered by Dr. F. Iska at the
Meeting of the Free Congregation in
Czecks-English School, Chicago,
Ill.—Spoken in Czeck.

(Translated by C. J. Wasta.)

The great poet and philosopher, Goethe, writes in his autobiography of horrors of the earthquake in Lisbon in 1755. He was only seven years old. In school he had been taught about the god who rules the world and without whose will nothing happens. He learned about the attributes of God, his omnipotence, which is such that he only thinks and it happens; his goodness that knows no limit; his great wisdom that cannot be mistaken, neither can it be deceived; his righteousness that reward the good and punishes the bad. At that time when his childish imagination was wholly occupied with that power and goodness people spoke in his presence of the horrors of the earthquake in which 60,000 human beings perished in a minute.

"God, creator and ruler of heavens and earth, which the first dogma described to me as so wise and kind, had not proved to be a good father, when he gave honest and dishonest to like destruction. My child-mind could not comprehend and settle that," says Goethe.

More than one hundred and fifty years have passed, and frequently there has been the same or similar destruction of lives; honest and dishonest.

Now again just at Christmas time, when the churches and homes of the most religious inhabitants of Southern Italy and Sicily hummed with rejoicing—Christ the Lord was born; be glad, rejoice. At night on the Sunday after Christmas, which a large majority of the inhabitants spent in prayer, that country over which God wisely rules shakes so that houses fall and bury in their ruins hundreds of thousands of honest and dishonest, among them innocent children, who just at the hour before they went to bed, in their gratitude specially prayed to Jesus and recommend themselves to the protection of God's angels.

The ruler of heaven and earth is omniscient, religion teaches. He then knew what will happen. He is omnipotent. His will alone, or a single action, would have been sufficient to avert all these horrors which he knew of ahead; but he remained inactive. And when the disaster already occurred he was not moved by the lamentation, wailing, and groans of the injured,

dying in a horrible torture. He certainly must have heard cries for help of those pious and honest victims. He hears them, but what does he do? Nothing!

He allows the sea to raise, and with its waves flood the ruined cities and colony; ruins everything what yet alive remained; where the waves could not reach, there he gives free field to fire, in which flames are the dying father, mother, son, daughter and babe—in a horrible torture. Idly he looks at it; ruler of heavens and earth, yet, he is in the way of man who hurries to help. With his will—without god's a hair will not come off man's head. All connections are broken with the unfortunate col. ony—railroad tracks torn up and waves of ocean oppose access to harbors. Only for those hymns in a human form he makes it somehow possible so they could be first on a spot and in their greediness for gold could cut fingers and ears off the dead and yet even of the living. With his will they give the finishing blow and plunder. ("And God knew that it was good," Genes's 1:10.)

Man has heart. He subdues instinct of self-consciousness and with a spirit of a hero, multitudes hurry to help. They do not mind that every second new concussions of earth may follow and prepare them a grave after a horrible death. Even a world's ruler, of course one whose blood is not yet poisoned of a heroic liberator of a nation from god's deputy, he hurries with his Slavonic wife so he could stop and lessen horrors that are done with his will—ruler of heaven.

Work of rescue is in full force, everyone without difference of nationality and religion—Russian, Frenchman, Englishman, schismatic, heretic, Catholic, unbeliever, man and woman—everyone strains to a superhuman strength and only god proceeds in his awful deed; he wants to and allows new concussions, to which victims are falling, even part of those heroes, and he sends a new cross. Who he loves he visits him with a cross—he sends hunger, insanity, sickness and perhaps already pestilence, that will certainly come if church fanaticism will win, that opposes the burning dead bodies, which are sown in a whole vicinity.

People under Rome's fanaticism in their spiritual dullness, stand in opposition to the most necessary protective means and looks for protection to St. Agathy, patroness of earthquake, and expects help from holy banners and the most holy hosts they

carry in procession. They are looking for miracles to happen, that this or that priest or nun came out unharmed and that a certain chalice with hosts did not burn. That thousands of innocent children perished and also hundreds of clergy, and that numbers of churches tumbled, and hundreds of holy statues are ruined, that thousands of holy hosts, life sons of god, either burned or floated as food to sea, monsters that will be forgotten. They will look for miracles, and they will find them and belief among people uneducated will yet be strengthened—and there are many of them in Italy and Sicily, and as soon as the survivors will come to themselves a little their first solicitude will be to order and pay for holy masses to liberate unfortunate victims of earthquake from purgatory. Holy father already ordered mourning masses to be read for that purpose, in the meantime perhaps without pay; but soon paid orders will gather in; and everything at last will come out well for church and god, who, what he doeth, he doeth well.

The uneducated among the religious will even not think, but will pray further on; the half educated among church members will be satisfied with that god's ways are unknown, and educated people, as far as they wish to believe, will say that earthquake is a phenomenon of nature; with which god has nothing to do and immediately they will praise "almighty" omnipotent god, wise ruler of heaven and earth. This is the logic of those who wish to believe. In proportion there will be only few of those, who, like seven-year-old Goethe, will acknowledge impossibility of such awful horrors by god's omnipotency and as they cannot doubt the fact of this horrible catastrophe they will begin to doubt about the omnipotent ruler of heavens and earth.

I know ahead that my language will be condemned as blasphemy, but I also know if there be a god he will certainly give me na heaven for this, that I deny that he is omnipotent and could prevent those horrors if he wanted to. Not the one who says, "There is no god" is blaspheming, but the one who preaches and believes that everything is the work and will of god, including these awful horrors at the description of which the blood runs cold, that one is blaspheming. He is blaspheming man to whom he gives such a god as an example.

Far more human and god-like is man as it was proved in this horrible event. Heroism of those, who on the ground of horror risk their lives, the humanity of those, who are trying with their gifts to lessen the effects of the disaster—tears of the poor, who has nothing himself to give but sympathy; those are cheerful revelations, that offer a contrast from the bloody luster of a supposed gods' deed.

In love and charity man excels your god,

and science has projected high above him.

Science greatly assisted in help. It is to the credit of science that help and necessities were delivered so rapidly to the place of horrors. Catechism did not give receipt for locomotives and steamboats; neither bible revealed to us wireless telegraphy, with which first help was called, and with which boats were called together circling on a high sea. Doctors armed with knowledge saved thousands of unfortunates of the earthquake who would have died in awful suffering. How fortunate for them, that science is not like god, who remains constantly the same. Jehovah's madness and revenge made the prophet Jeremiah weep, and reproachfully call: "Look god and see to whom you ever done so? Neither women eat their product, blissful babes? Look, on the ground, in streets lay young and old, virgins and bachelors wine-fell, you killed, you murdered them in the day of your rashness without mercy." Weeping of Jeremiah, 2:21-25. God did not change, but fortunately science advanced.

Science had proved blessed in its activity, enabled help and laid boundary to the raging destruction. Science also gives us the only consolation in view of such phenomenon of nature. Who believes that nature is ruled by the arbitrary power of an omnipotent ruler—he must, at the sight of his terrible act, shudder with constant fear and boundless anxiety for what that rule in his despotism will carry out tomorrow. Who studies science, knows that the universe is not a dread monster with which some being could play at pleasure. He knows that the universe is ruled by cause and effect, and that all phenomenon of nature are acted upon by necessary causes. These causes, as far as they go for injurious phenomenon of nature, science is trying to remove. It has already discovered causes of earthquakes and then it will be possible to remove entirely these causes at their strength and extent, it will certainly be possible to ascertain time and place of earthquake beforehand; whereby its horrors will be removed.

Science has already made considerable steps in this direction. Seismology, as the science about earthquakes is called, has a line of shrewd workers, who are armed with delicate instruments with which they record all concussions of earth. Let us hope that as it has been with most phenomenon of nature that it will also be the same in view of earthquakes, that after their first beginnings their explanations will rapidly follow by discovering their causes and means with which these causes will be acted upon.

The horrors of the last earthquake in Italy and Sicily will inflame searching minds, and in that we can behold the only consolation of that horrible phenomenon of nature.

The struggle with the injurious phenomena of nature, that threaten our lives, have awakened a lion in the human breast, who gathers his strengths; man sharpens his sense and his will is of steel. For scientific research the professional man will exert their sharp senses and will persist until science will get even this horrible phenomenon under its control. We hope that, and to that is aimed our wish in the interest of those, who will come after us. In this light we see true martyrs in those unfortunate victims whose death will bring profit to future generations. To the memory of the dead we give the honor and to the living belongs our help.

Chicago, Ill.

THE WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE.

Truth Alone Can be Dogmatic—Not Justified by Mere Personal Beliefs.

(By Julia C. Coon.)

Writers of the Freethought press not uncommonly speak of Materialists as being dogmatic in their assertions that there is no god and no future life. The expression awakens some interesting questions as to just what dogmatism signifies. Was it a preacher or an agnostic who said that at least no one could be justified in declaring there are no gods until he has searched every nook and corner of the universe to make sure? What a precarious state such an individual's mind must be in! He must still suspect the existence of the great monsters ancient geographers used to picture in the unexplored countries on their maps—for it is not likely he has been to all these places to disprove their existence. He accepts Alice in Wonderland, and all the rest of the wonder tales inflicted on helpless children—for how is one to be sure? He cannot say as to Zeus, and the rest of the long line of Greek gods—it would sound dogmatic to express an opinion. It would be necessary for him to sit up on the house roof all night before he knew what he thought about St. Nicholas and even then he wouldn't want to make any strong, "dogmatic" assertion.

To come clearly to the point, is a person dogmatic when he says there is a god, and not dogmatic when he says there is not? It would seem that the assertion that there is a god requires reliable proof which has never yet been furnished. The alleged proof that has been produced has been found to be spurious. And until reliable proof is furnished, or until some god makes a revelation to each individual, and expresses a desire to be believed in, worshipped, flattered, and advised, is such individual not justified in ignoring any such creation. It appears dogmatic to assert there is a god, without proof to back the statement and the height of dogmatism,

outside of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, may be found in the ascribed teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus, where he stoutly asserts: "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned."

And in regard to future life, the same argument is true. We have never yet had reliable evidence that conscious life exists after death. None have returned or spoken from the grave. From the countless lessons of nature, we find no promise, no hope, no chance to enter another arena, and again try our part. All point alike to ceaseless rest, reaffiliation with earthy matter, and the oblivion from which we came. To build groundless hope is the part of a child.

Truly, there is no end of alleged proof, and it is of the same order as the "god" proof. Many saviors—far too many—are said to have been resurrected. Spurious proof invariably weakens the side for which it is produced, and strengthens the other side. Truth never has need to resort to spurious proof.

Those who would fain find comfort in the thought of a future picture to themselves an existence without the many ills that we seem heir to in this life. A degenerating, or entering into a life where people were even more ignorant and foolish, and consequently more miserable would not appeal, for it would lack the power of consolation. And yet, of the innumerable messages claimed to have been received from the "spirit world" is there one an intelligent adult of our material world would want to own? Those given to the press have invariably been of a trivial, childish, unreliable, and contradictory nature. Surely by Paine, and Lincoln, and Ingersoll are exonerated by all people in the least familiar with their writings from having ever said the things ambitious mediums attribute to them. Here indeed is a prospect tending to lend horror and terror to the contemplation of death—the possibility that mediums will put their prattle in our mouths.

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